DETAILED ACTION

The following is an Allowance in response to the communications received on February 26 and June 9, 2008. Claims 1-27 are allowed.

Examiner's Amendment

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Austen Zuege (Reg No. 57, 907) on June 9, 2008.

The claims have been amended as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A workflow management system for hosting process-based tasks and decisioning, the workflow management system comprising:
a collection of software components stored in computer-readable memory and on a single platform, the collection comprising:

a collection of software components on a single platform, the collection comprising:

a software component for business user to establish configurable workflow checklists in real-time in which a plurality of differentiated tasks are set up and made available for configuring any type of workflow;

wherein each workflow task can avail of a plurality of existing or new underlying business parameter objects that can be embedded for workflow task automation;

a data dictionary associated with each workflow, wherein each workflow is driven by the associated data dictionary for a selected industry to which that workflow corresponds, the software component for business users having the ability to use, handle, and manage the data dictionary and to generated entry conditions and rules dynamically without restarting applications or rewriting underlying software code;

wherein the software component for business users includes a graphical interface usable to configure workflows at runtime, wherein runtime follows a software programming stage, the graphical user interface having a list of business parameter objects represented as geometric shapes and a workspace, each business parameter object represented as a geometric shape being an abstracted object-based representation of functions within the collection of software components, the workspace for organizing and linking multiple geometric shapes at runtime in an ordered arrangement of objects, the ordered arrangement of objects corresponding to an order in which the multiple differentiated tasks are performed when any of the configurable workflow checklists are executed; and

a database for storing the arranged objects in the configurable workflow checklists as well as for storing the entry conditions and embedding information for the

business parameter objects that are associated with each of the multiple differentiated tasks.

8. (Currently Amend) A workflow system for programmatically managing dynamic workflow processes, the workflow system comprising:

a rules database containing logical mathematical operators made available at runtime;

a workflow engine having computer-executable instructions stored in computer-readable memory and for performing task list processing as defined by a plurality of task lists, with any number of the plurality of task lists processed by the workflow engine at any given time, the workflow engine being a software component containing a plurality of discrete functions defined for each application within the workflow system prior to runtime;

a workflow designer for configuring the plurality of task lists, the workflow designer having an object-based interface for creation and modification of task lists at runtime using functionality of a drag-and-drop approach, the workflow designer having a display window comprising:

a function list containing multiple symbols, each symbol corresponding to at least one of the plurality of discrete functions accessible within the workflow engine at runtime;

a business parameter object list, each business parameter object able to be embedded with any of the discrete functions represented as symbols;

a workspace providing a graphical area for assembly of ordered task lists at runtime, the workflow designer allowing for assembly of ordered tasks by dragging and dropping one of the multiple symbols into the workspace, and embedding business parameter objects with any of the discrete functions represented as symbols, the workflow designer provides graphical links for assembling and reassembling an ordered task list from multiple discrete symbols; and

tools for configuring entry conditions associated with any of the plurality of discrete functions for each task list according to logical mathematical operators selected from the rules database and configured at runtime, wherein each entry condition is evaluated by the workflow engine with respect to each of the plurality of discrete functions such that a particular one of the plurality of discrete functions is executed by the workflow engine only if all of the entry conditions associated with that particular one of the plurality of discrete functions evaluate to true; and

a data dictionary configurable for each task list for defining discrete data elements and data relationships that are associated with each of the plurality of discrete functions of the workflow engine, wherein the contents of each data dictionary are specific to a selected industry, and wherein the data dictionaries associated with each task list is dynamically modifiable via the
workflow designer in real time without restarting applications or rewriting underlying software programming;

wherein the workflow engine performs discrete functions for which all associated entry conditions evaluate to true in an order determined by the ordered task list to render a decision to a remote user.

22. (Currently Amend) A system for programmatically rendering a process-based decision, the system comprising:

a plurality of configurable discrete tasks made available at runtime;

a plurality of business parameter objects made available at runtime, and capable of being embedded with any of the plurality of configurable discrete tasks for specifying automation of the process-based decisioning for a checklist;

a rules database made available for configuring rule-based entry conditions and selection criteria associated with the configurable discrete tasks at runtime;

an administrative interface utilized by business users at runtime for creating process categories and checklists associated with each process and for modifying the entry conditions and the selection criteria associated with the discrete tasks, wherein the entry conditions govern whether or not each of the discrete tasks is performed during execution of a given checklist at runtime for generating the instant decision as a function of the processed input associated with the entry conditions and the selection criteria;

a decision database for storing the process categories, the checklists, the entry conditions and the selection criteria as configured by business users at runtime;

a workflow engine having computer-executable instructions stored in computer-readable memory and defined on a single platform prior to runtime for automatically processing input from a remote user and generating an instant decision based on the checklist at runtime;

a dynamic data dictionary associated with each checklist formatted in XML for defining data elements and data relationships specific to a selected industry, wherein the dynamic data dictionary associated with each checklist provides a dynamic fetch and store interface with the decision database, and wherein the dynamic data dictionary for each checklist is configurable by the business users through the administrative interface at runtime to provide, translate and modify data presentation with respect to both the remote user and the workflow engine such that the workflow engine and the administrative tools can be utilized at runtime by business users across a plurality of industries at runtime without requiring restarting or reprogramming of the administrative interface or the workflow engine to customize the workflow engine and the administrative tools for relevant industries; and

a messaging system for routing two-way communications between the remote user and the process administrator, the messaging system providing a digital record of programmatic transactions.

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kalyan K. Deshpande whose telephone number is (571) 272-5880. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey A. Smith can be reached on (571) 272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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